economic competitiveness of Indian firms, continuing access to U.S. and other international markets, and growth in domestic demand, will sustaiin the rapid growth of the Indian information technology industry.

(c) Reduction in the annual quota of H1B visas will adversely affect employment opportunities for information technology professionals from all countries. The annual flow of information technology professionals to the United States also depends on a number of other market-related factors, including the trends in the U.S. information technology market.

Immigration Racket

274. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the British Home Office has taken up with the Indian High Commission in UK, the issue of illegal immigration racket involving Indian High Commission officials;

(b) if so, whether an Attache of Indian High Commission in London was recalled at the behest of British Home Office;

(c) whether it is a fact that the British Home Office has charged that some officials of MEA, New Delhi are involved in this recket; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) The U.K. authorities had provided information to the Government of India on the possible involvement of some officials in one of our Consulates in the U.K.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(d) The information provided by U.K. authorities has been handed over to CBI to conduct an investigation into the matter.